



Testimony of
Sharon M. Palmer, Commissioner
Department of Labor
Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee
March 12, 2015

Good Day Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Willis, Senator Witkos and Representative Betts and members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with testimony regarding **House Bill No. 6696 AAC Workforce Development**. My name is Sharon Palmer and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Labor.

This proposed bill calls for a study of issues concerning workforce development. The language of the proposed bill does not describe the issues to be covered in this study. Within the last two months, the Department, through its Office of Workforce Competitiveness, has submitted five reports, studies and plans to the legislature concerning issues concerning workforce development that were prepared by either CTDOL staff or consultants.

One report provides information on the current status of the healthcare industry, changes in the health care delivery system expected to affect the workforce as well as recommendations for legislative consideration, as well as an inventory of programs statewide working to address labor market shortages in the health care industry.

The Connecticut Employment and Training Commission 2014 Legislative Report Card provides detail of the labor market outcomes (employment and earnings) for 2012-13 graduates of Connecticut's public higher education system (the University of Connecticut and the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities) and several Department of Labor programs. The information on public higher education graduates is presented by school, program of study and industry of employment and includes demographic data. Additional demographic data, including education level is reported for the Department of Labor programs along with the information about participant labor market outcomes and budgetary information.

Connecticut Employment and Training Commission (CETC) submitted its annual plan updating selected Connecticut workforce initiatives consistent with CETC's adopted goals of promoting business growth, strengthening Connecticut's current workforce, developing the state's future talent, and promoting an integrated and aligned workforce system. The document provides an overview of numerous initiatives underway across the state demonstrating innovative collaboration among CETC members and various other partners and stakeholders.

Connecticut's Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Annual Report for Program Year 2013 (PY13)

reflects positive outcomes and programs successes that were achieved through the dedicated efforts of the Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL), the state's five Workforce Investment Board (WIB) partners, state and local agencies, and community organizations. Well-established, successful programs and services were offered during PY13, as were promising, innovative opportunities in education and training. Local initiatives, many of which engaged employers, were developed with the goal of fostering economic growth and, throughout the year, the focus of continuing to grow a skilled workforce that meets and sustains the needs of the state's businesses remained strong. The summaries and data included in this comprehensive report highlight the state's overall accomplishments and offer details by region.

It is unclear whether the study mandated by the proposed bill will be duplicative of reports already being done. The Department would need additional information to determine the scope of such study. If the study is extensive, there are no appropriations in the budget for a wide-ranging study.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.